

THE NATIONAL ERA.

G. BAILEY, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR; JOHN G. WHITTIER, CORRESPONDING EDITOR.

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THE NATIONAL ERA IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY, ON SEVENTH STREET, OPPOSITE OLD FOWLER'S HALL.

TERMS.

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WASHINGTON, APRIL 7, 1851.

For the National Era.

ABOUT SETH MILFORD.

BY FANNY LEE.

The mists hung red along the blue base-mantle of the October sky, and now and then was heard the uncertain, impatient twitter of some wild bird that lingered behind its fellows, for the last flock had drifted over the hills and fled off in the distance, like clouds. The woods, now yet withered from their winter's wear, were beautiful exceeding! The wind, crying for the last summer, ran along the tops of the long reaches of maples, breathing their shivering coldness of leaves into golden furrows—low hedges of the red, glossy-leaved gunns ran among the forks of the hills, and the brown, shaggy vines of the wild grape, full of black clusters, clambered about sassafras and elm, while the oaks still towered in green magnificence.

The sun grew larger and larger, and went down. To most minds the autumn is a melancholy time, sweeping off the light and beauty from the summer, and leaving the world, like Eden when the Fall swept thence the light, and the shades of sorrow blotted out the footprints of the angels.

In a stubble field, high and flat, bordered on two sides with thick woods, out on an open meadow, from which just now the cows were wading their way slowly homeward, and on the other commanding a view of the homestead and the road, Seth Milford was ploughing.

The air was all fragrant with the smell of fresh earth, as furrow after furrow crumbled up, and the weary and jaded horse, a really beautiful specimen of his tribe, steadily walked backward and forward across the field, in obedience to the hand of his master.

Twilight fell deeper and darker, and the silver ring of the new moon was seen just over the western tree-tops, when Seth paused at the edge of the field nearest the house, drew the plough from the furrow on to the narrow border of grass that edged the stubble, loosed the traces, and winding the long rein about the slender and glossey neck of his horse, lowered bars, and the animal walked briskly homeward alone.

With arms folded across his bosom, and eyes bent on the ground, the young ploughman remained for some time, leaning listlessly against the fence; and it was not until his good steel, that, having reached the next bars, found himself unable to proceed further, had once or twice neighed impatiently, that his reverie, of whatever nature it may have been, was interrupted. Drawing his rough boots backward and forward over the long and fallen grass, by way of cleansing them from the moist earth, he refolded his arms, lowered his head a little over his sunken brow, and was proceeding slowly and mechanically homeward, when he was interrupted with a brisk, lively salutation of "How are you, Seth?" The young man looked up, and a smile, half sorrowful, half disdainful, passed across his regularly handsome features, as though he scarcely knew whether most to pity or despise any one who could be happy in this world. The recipient of this somewhat dubious greeting was a young neighboring farmer, with a round, rosy face, indicative of good nature and good health, with large gray eyes, and the beginnings of a yellowish-colored beard.

After cordially shaking the hand of his uncouth neighbor, he apologized a little bluntly, for crossing without liberty his hands; for it must be owned that Seth Milford had, either justly or unjustly, obtained the reputation of being a little selfish and particular, as to who trespassed on his premises.

The young man was evidently arrayed in his best; and whether the fashion of his garments was the "precise Broadway style or not, mattered little to him. He was going, he said, the distance of a mile or so further, to "sit up with a corpse," and the direction he had taken enabled him materially to shorten the way.

"Who is dead?" inquired Seth, manifesting for the first time a little interest.

"Humph!" he said, on learning who it was; "he was a young man—must have been younger than I—and yet has been so blest as to die."

"Yes," said the happy farmer, without understanding or apparently heeding the conclusion of the remark; "yes, he was young, sir; if he had lived till the twenty-second of January, he would have been his man. Good evening, sir."

"Humph!" said Seth again, looking after the young watcher, and then repeated, half aloud, as he turned homeward—

"Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
That forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought Death into the world, and all our woe."

It seems, sometimes, as if we'd drift either and thither, by the blind chance of life, to perish, at last, like the flower of the grass; and this especially seems the case, when, after striving earnestly but vainly to pierce the thick darkness that lies between the farthest stretch of imagination, and the eternal brightness about God, our trembling hands fall back upon our feeble humanity. Else seems it that we were predestined from eternity to fill some certain bound from which there is no escape; and, sick at heart, we turn from all lofty endeavor. We have too little of the child's faith—too little simple and trustful reliance upon "our Father which is in heaven."

"The good are never fatalists—

The bad alone act by necessity."

says the poet. There are some, however, not bad, who, partly owing to an unhealthy temperament, moody and morbid, and partly to the continually fretful contrast of high aspirations and crippled powers, become, in the end, fatalists.

One of this unfortunate class was Seth Milford. Born and bred on the farm which he now inherited, and having never been beyond the shadows of his native hills, he had, nevertheless, "immortal longings in him."

Having assigned himself a certain task, Seth continued to plough backward and forward long after the sun was set. But it was accomplished as last, and drawing his horse to a standstill, he stopped for a horse to rest and brouse from briars, while taking a book from his pocket, he sat down on the grass bank and read, he really looked enviable—like as was of the broad acres and the world.

The wind was overcast, and the easterly wind blew chilly all day—the leaves fell fast, and drifited to great yellow winrows along the woods—the note dropped off as a stronger gust swept by—the cattle cowered in the shade of the hills—it was the corral, on the sides of the hills—it was already growing late, and the clouds indicated a speedy

rain.

"I can soon bring her, though her appetite—"

"I have told you, reader, simply a story of human life, and you will say, 'May I tell you how to kindly consider for those with whom you journey, and, O, to not fall out by the way; for we when we remember a wrong done, and feel our utter impotence to lift the pallid forehead over it, we drown it with our sorrow and our love.'

For the National Era and Friends.—The total value of merchandise imported from Baltimore during the week ending on Thursday was \$123,766.21. Breakfasts and tobacco were the principal articles shipped during the week. Among the imports we note a valuable case from Liverpool, one from Bremen, and two oil cases from May, the initiative, and call a General Convention at Buffalo, Cleveland, or Pittsburgh.

The grant to the road in Alabama and other States through which the road will pass amounts to two million acres.

FORUM ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL.—The total value of merchandise imported from Baltimore during the week ending on Thursday was \$123,766.21. Breakfasts and tobacco were the

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It was a wise rule among the Jesuits, that he would not permit of two persons talking apart; and if these sisters had strictly kept such a rule, how much happiness would have been gained, how much misery would have been avoided!

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SKETCHES BY PATTY LEE.—We commence this week, on the first page, the publication of a series of Sketches by "Patty Lee." If any one can read the first of the series without having his heart deeply touched, and a lesson impressed upon it for life, he must be made of flinty material.

GOV. CLEVELAND RE-ELECTED.—We rejoice at the re-election of Gov. Cleveland from Connecticut. Waldo's district is not heard from.

MASSACHUSETTS.—No choice in the 2d and 4th districts. Goodrich (Whig) gains in the 7th.

RECEPTION OF MR. WEBSTER AT HARRISBURG.—SPEECH OF GOV. JOHNSTON.

The newspapers are occupied now-a-days with Mr. Webster's letters, speeches, journeys, and receptions; that we should be very remiss were we to pass them over in silence.

As the Secretary is so frequently absent from his post, our foreign relations cannot be in a critical or complicated condition, and the Department of State, we presume, has little to attend to but mere routine business. At all events, our Secretary of State appears to be far more concerned for the interests of the Interior than for those of the Exterior.

Orificial magnates in ancient times shrank from the public gaze, and shut themselves up in their palaces, under the impression that the reserve of their lives would invest them in the imagination of the People with a kind of mysterious sanctity. In these days they had no steam, locomotives, or penny papers, and people had little to think of but mysteries. Great men cannot now shut themselves up, without being forgotten by a world going by steam, and where everybody thinks more of himself than anybody else. No one understands this better than Mr. Webster, who bids fair to become the great traveller, speech-maker, and letter-writer of the country. He is a kind of ubiquitous presence, seeking everywhere to stamp his name and signature on the popular mind.

On the first of this month he paid a visit to Harrisburg, and was received in the Hall of the House of Representatives by both branches of the Legislature and Governor Johnston and his suite. The Governor dons the honor very handsomely, but his speech, unexceptionably cautious in omitting all allusion to Mr. Webster's late policy, and complimenting him for former services, was throughout grateful to the Secretary. In truth, it does honor to the head and heart of Governor Johnston, who clearly shows that, unlike another prominent man of the Whig party in Pennsylvania, he cannot change his opinions to suit circumstances. It is thus reported:

"Mr. Webster, in behalf of the constituted authorities, and at their request, in the name of the citizens of Pennsylvania here present, I most cheerfully perform the duty of extending to you a most cordial welcome to this Commonwealth. It has ever been a distinguishing privilege to live in the character of the American People, whose talents and to render to the long public service of individuals the homage of their respect and approbation."

"In the most excellent and beautiful property of our national character, it has been the constant effort of the citizens of Pennsylvania to be conspicuously prominent. Under no circumstances and at no time have her people failed to appreciate and reward the patriotic labors of strangers, and to render them just tribute of pride and admiration of transmission, manly abilities, without regard to sectional location or the field of their operations, whether the same may have been in the discharge of religious, civil, or military duty."

"In the fairest, purest, and worth of the public men of the Union, our Commonwealth has felt the same pride which the mother enjoys in the well-doings of a beloved son. We may differ in political parties, but it is confidently hoped never to differ in character, for it is a fact well known to all that the people of this state have justly earned, of awarding to all men the respect and regard due to their merits and services. If not the self-styled mother of great men, Pennsylvania has always endeavored faithfully to cherish, to protect, and to reward the sons of men and good of other lands. It would afford me great pleasure to extend these remarks by a reference to some of the important acts of your long public life, about the patriotism and purity of which no diversity of opinion exists. If I may add that in so doing I was detained this past evening of fair ladies and worthy citizens from an intellectual treat which, from its propriety and richness, may well be impatiens to appear before the audience, to introduce a few additional and respectful regard the distinguished Secy. Ret. of State of the National Government, the Hon. Daniel Webster."

There was no flattery in all this—not the recognition of the propriety of Mr. Webster's course in relation to late agitating questions. On the contrary, but a single personal allusion is made to the Secretary, and that is so shaped as to compliment him for those acts of his life, "about the patriotism and purity of which no diversity of opinion can exist," implying plainly enough that, about more recent acts, there existed great diversity of opinion, of which, however, courtesy required him to say nothing. The Governor deserves praise for his independence, as well as for his political sagacity.

Mr. Webster, in his reply, although he knew that many of those who had assembled to extend to him the hospitalities of the State, did not approve of his course on the Compromise measures, could not refrain from glorifying himself for the part he had taken in their passage.

"If I had happened," he said, "to have been before this assemblage, in this place, one year ago to-day, on the first of April of last year, I should have met you with a far less gladness than I did, for it is a fact well known to all that the cause of great import has been decided within the last year—that measures have been adopted, by the general concurrence of men of all parties, calculated to adjust local differences, and settle the agitating questions of the country. It is time that we should feel kindly one towards another—that we should feel that we are one people, that we have one interest, one character, one liberty, and one destiny."

"I bore an humble and earnest part in the procurement of that adjustment, established by the last Congress, and I am still willing that it is as much as the reason I could hope for. I trust to your own perception to see the great degree of cheerfulness prevailing in society around you, and the general progress of all interests under the influence of the industry of your people; and I know you will be gratified to find that the cause of great import has been decided within the last year—that measures have been adopted, by the general concurrence of men of all parties, calculated to adjust local differences, and settle the agitating questions of the country. It is time that we should feel kindly one towards another—that we should feel that we are one people, that we have one interest, one character, one liberty, and one destiny."

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cross my threshold, I swear, (and you know I always keep my word,) that I'll kick you away to the Abolitionists?

"What impression this order produced on this miserable slave, I do not know, but it was strictly executed."

A very beautiful dramatic scene, in a refreshingly juvenile style! To George's fear of being "kicked away to the Abolitionists" the world is indebted for this Romance of the History of Louisiana. We must say for the main body of the work, that it is far better than the purities of the preface would lead one to expect.

LETTER FROM LONDON.

LONDON, March 21, 1851.

To the Editor of the National Era:

Last Friday night, in the House of Commons, Lord John Russell made an extraordinary declaration—that in consequence of a motion made by Mr. Baillie, calling the attention of the House to the conduct of the Government in reference to Ceylon, which was to come upon the 25th, the Government would not bring forward its financial statement until that motion was disposed of.

They could not consent, with such a motion of censure hanging over their heads, to go on with business of importance.

The fact is, that the Government is deeply at fault in reference to Ceylon, and its management there, and the Cabinet fears a vote of censure, and has taken this method to force the House into silence. The country cannot spare the Cabinet at this juncture, and they know it, and therefore dare to threaten. On Monday evening Lord John was checked by Mr. Baillie, who withdrew his motion. Without any doubt he will renew it, after the amended Budget is presented. The Premier lost his temper under this treatment, for he had hoped finally to have settled the Ceylon affair under the peculiar circumstances of the time. As it is now, he can find no fault, for there is no motion fixed upon the subject, and he can have no excuse for delaying business, and still he well knows that the dreaded motion will come by and by, when he will not be so well prepared to meet it.

A considerable impression has been made upon the House and country at large, by the presentation of a petition from the Hon. Craven F. Berkeley, in reference to Catholic Convents. It seems that a step-daughter of his, although a ward in court, was placed some time ago by Catholic friends in a Convent as a "postulant"; and that the young lady, though fair and promising, has been so worked upon, that she shortly takes the black veil. He himself is not allowed any intercourse with her; and his own daughter, her half-sister, has not sufficient opportunity with her to cultivate any intimate acquaintance—and yet this Convent is in England. The secret of the whole matter is, that the girl has a fortune worth £80,000, and all this immense sum goes to the Catholics as soon as she takes the veil. This account for the uncaring nature of her Catholic friends, (in his opinion), over spiritual interests. The petitioner, asks for a clause in the Ecclesiastical Titles bill which shall cosecute all such property to the Crown, where young girls have been, through the arts of the Jesuits, enticed or frightened into renouncing the world and their property. There is, however, no probability of his petition being granted. Even those who agree with him in his opinion of Convents, Priests, and Jesuits, do not like his law-proposition against them.

The Ecclesiastical Titles bill has been discussed in the House pretty thoroughly during the last week, and some able speeches made on both sides of the question. On the whole, the country is tired out with it, and is ready to dismiss it. A frigil explosion took place near Glasgow on Sunday night, in a coal pit. At the time there were 63 men in the mine, and only two have been rescued alive. One of them was two days, or nearly so, buried alive. The utmost sympathy is everywhere felt for the families of the sufferers. Recent news from China announces the discovery of an interesting race of Jews in that country, 350 miles interior from Pekin. The discovery was made by missionaries from England.

General Sir Charles Napier arrived in London from India. His popularity is great with the people, and the officers at the railway station gave him a round of cheers when he alighted. He is a veteran soldier, and is a thorough-going economist in all military matters. He is also, well-known as a writer. His "Lights and Shadows of Military Life" is a book widely read and admired. Bad as is his profession, there is such a stern honesty in his character, such a boldness in his conduct, that he is warmly loved and admired. He does not hesitate to arraign the Government for its misdeeds abroad, for its wretched extravagance in military matters, and that too in a fearless manner. Such men always have enemies, but devoted friends; and even his enemies fear and respect him, if they cannot love him. He is a striking man in his personal appearance, resembling faintly, in some of his features, that old hero, General Jackson. His shaggy whiskers and eyebrows give him a fierce look, and he is not very tame when roused. He is very old, and has quitted life, where he had spent so much of his life, forever.

The Italian Opera commences its London "season" on the evening of Saturday, the 29th instant. The old favorite, Madam Grisi, is engaged, as well as Mademoiselle Variole, Tamburini, and other well-known to the musical world. Although Madam Grisi is old, and has lost the position which she once held in the musical world, yet she has a vast many admirers, and after one hearing in one of her best parts, he does not wonder at it.

Mrs. Kemble is advertised next week to read Shakespeare at the St. James Theatre. She is as popular as ever.

We already begin to feel the approach of the May weather. The Palace of Westminster, Minister, and all the other old London streets, to the great wonder of nursery children and servant girls. The work goes on at the Palace with great dispatch, and though an enormous amount of labor is to be performed, there is no doubt that the Exhibition will open on the first of May. The American Tripartite Law, introduced in Southampton last week, and the cargo of goods for the Exhibition is daily arriving here by railway. The inhabitants of Southampton are much pleased with the arrival of that Prince Albert, the Queen here, with him.

Exhibition goods from all quarters of the globe are pouring into London; the streets are filling up with Frenchmen, Germans, Chinese, and Americans. You can instantly tell an American from a European, in a peculiar manner, a mixture of ardor and independence, which betrays his parentage at once.

For the last week or two we have had an unusual quantity of wet weather. The streets have been flooded with water, and the houses by the water-side will have had a wet summer. If it will be, it will be exceedingly unpleasant for the Exhibition-mongers. There is not a city in the world which is so dark and dismal as London, in the wet season; and if there be a wet May and June, the world of foreigners will go back to their homes thanking God that they were not born in England.

During the adjourned discussion of the Ecclesiastical Titles bill in the House of Commons last evening, there was a scene of up roar and excitement, and some shouting, in the Anti-Slavery Committee. Harry Drummond, in a speech of great personal and vituperative, declared that nobodies were "other prisons or bastilles." At once he was interrupted by a storm of cries from the Catholic members. After a scene most disgraceful, he had to leave the House, and by the water-side will have had a wet summer.

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Every day shows plainly that this is a question which cannot be discussed in Parliament with propriety or decorum. The slaves of Africa and of Asia, and of America, must be set free, down. Let Protestants agitate as much as they please with pulpit, pen, and tongue, and Eunuchs have charge of the police of the latter, though they are officed with their own sex, who encourage their rank and file to earn the softer allurements of their nature. They believe themselves to be men, not

There seems no longer to be any prospect of a fusion between the Orleanists and Legitimists, and, as a consequence, there seems to be more of an inclination among the latter towards a prolongation of the President's power.

Lyons, still greater multitudes have usually occurred at the funerals of members, and the Government has forbidden more than three hundred persons to attend any funeral.

The prospect of the establishment of a Federal Power in Germany is not bright. The King of Prussia, it is said, is coming more under the influence of General Radowitz.

It is stated from Dresden, in reference to Hesse, that the Hessian Parliament has decided in favor of universal amnesty, and that even the Austrian representatives does not approve of the proposed severe measures of the detestable Hassempflug.

The prospects of liberty in Europe, as well as in America, at present, seem to be dark.

THE TRANSATLANTIC WORLD.

The wide field before us—Africa's hidden treasures, geography, and resources, likely soon to be better known.—The Kingdom of Dahomey—the great centre of the interior slave-trade.—What was before known of it?—Concerning its laws, customs, policy, etc.—Its development, its strange, anomalous, certainly unexampled national character, military, existing in Interior Africa.—The political condition of England.—The change being worked in the tenure of ministerial office there.—A new general election soon to come off.—The contest between Foreign Minister and Foreign Minister.—The new and more numerous corps of staff officers.—The new and more numerous corps of staff officers.—The Catholics deserve no credit for their present stand.—Romé essays in England what she forbids in Italy.—The "almighty dollar" at the bottom of the trouble.—Good to come of the religious controversy now progressing in England.

NEW YORK, April 6, 1851.

To the Editor of the National Era:

In the course of this series of papers I have written of things Asiatic as well as European, skipping here and there as subjects of interest presented themselves in the path of my reading and reflection. The groundwork of my plan is to discourse your readers upon the condition of the world beyond this Continent of ours, looking to Africa, too, whenever and wherever our affairs may furnish food for entertainment or profitable reflection.

Unfortunately, we can know little of her, so steeped in utter barbarism is her vast interior, and so inhospiitable her seemed soil and torrid climate, to the white man.

Yet this is the case with the majority of us.

Having received two communications giving an account of a speech delivered by C. M. Clay in Louisville, Kentucky, we publish the longer one, as being more satisfactory.—ED. ERA.

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On the 25th, when the Amazons of Dahomey, in whose country we may really confide, on reflecting that the extreme exercise of their fierce passion, or thirst for blood, must necessarily obliterate, pro rata, almost all other senses.

The superstitions of this strange people aid

greatly in the work of rendering this military force the most effective among the native tribes of Africa. On entering the service, each Amazon is supposed to become instantly a sacred being, on whom the eyes of the traveller may not gaze without committing sacrilege. They are the Amazons of Dahomey, in whose country we may really confide, on reflecting that the extreme exercise of their fierce passion, or thirst for blood, must necessarily obliterate, pro rata, almost all other senses.

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